

# A visit with Greg Bray

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## Duxbury Idol winner discovered voice on track bus

By SARAH COUGHLIN, CLIPPER CONTRIBUTOR

For someone who gave quite a few audience members at the 2011 Duxbury Idol contest goose bumps, it's hard to believe Greg Bray started "formally" singing a mere couple of months ago. Energetic, humble and fresh from his win as Duxbury Idol, Bray sat down with the Clipper to talk about everything from singing to biochemistry, and Bruce Springsteen.

### THE BRAY FILE

**Favorite Movie:** Tommy Boy

**Favorite Book:** Lord of the Rings

**Pet Peeve:** People touching my head or hair

**Hobby:** Music, running

**Family:** Mom, Dad, Brother, Sister

**How long have you been singing?** It's difficult to say. I hadn't really sung formally until about a couple of months ago. I sing on the back of our track bus a lot, with my friends. I don't sing in school chorus, but I play the sax and clarinet, so I'm musically trained. My friends encouraged me to try out for Duxbury Idol.

**How did you practice for the contest?** I practiced a lot in my car. My friend Billy Jewell and his mom, Debbie, helped me enormously. She is a vocal coach and he is going to school for music composition. I wouldn't have done well without their help. I knew the 3 songs I sang really well - they're on my iPod. I practiced more to figure out what I was going to do with the songs.

**How did your family react to your win?** I had a big cheering section at the contest. Most of them said they had no idea I could sing, let alone well, because I never sing in front of my family. They were taken aback and really, really happy. It was a lot of fun.

**Which songs did you sing?** My first song was "Accidentally in Love," by the Counting Crows, which I think won a lot of people over. I was able to be a showman, so to speak, for that one. My second song was "Hallelujah," for which I came out on the stage and was very stoic. It showed me more as a musician. I got a standing ovation from the crowd for that one. I was so grateful for the crowd's response. My last song was "Shout," which I prepared for the least. I wanted my first two songs to be the best.

**How many rounds were there and who were the judges?** There were three rounds. The first round was judged by the audience, the second by the judges, and the third again by the audience. Coach Marmaron [DHS football coach] was really good; we were all

pleasantly surprised by his unique comments and point of view. He was funny, too. Anna Turley, a DHS grad, was really nice and seemed to know what to say. She complimented everyone and gave a good musical perspective. Andrew Garland, an opera singer from Kingston, was the third judge and was a little harsh at times.

**Who was your toughest competition?** The two people I was up against in the end.

**Were your friends excited about your win?** They were super excited. I had a solid cheering section of about 10 or 15 friends. It was a really long competition and I think some of them considered leaving before the end, or so I heard. After my second song, they realized I may actually win and decided to stay.

**Did you think you were going to win?** I think I was initially surprised by the reactions I got in the beginning. Towards the end I noticed that the cheers lasted a lot longer when I sang, so I sort of thought maybe I had a chance of winning.

**What is your favorite kind of music to sing?** I have strange musical taste. I play a lot of classical with the clarinet, jazz with the sax and I also listen to contemporary stuff. It is difficult to pick one genre. Gospel is always fun to sing. I sing a lot of rock songs for fun. It's fun to see what you can do with strange/weird music.

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**If you could record a song with any artist, who would it be?** The sax player from Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band, Clarence Clemens. I really like the way he plays. Bruce would be a really fun person to record with, too. I like that he writes his own music and think we would have a lot of fun trying out different things.

**Where is your favorite place to sing?** Easily the track bus. It's always so much fun, and that's where I found my singing talent. Either there or Mrs. Ciccarelli's English class

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**Are you watching this season of American Idol? What do you think of Steven Tyler and Jennifer Lopez as judges?** I am; this season and the wide range of all the contestants surprised me. They all bring something different to every song and have a good sense as to who they want to be as artists. Jacob was my favorite, but he got voted off. As for the judges, Jennifer gives a lot of good feedback and legitimate criticism. Steven brings interesting points to the show; he doesn't criticize very much which is kind of unfortunate. He is entertaining at least. Randy is Randy, but it is good he has stepped more into the critical role.

**Will you ever try out for American Idol?** I am considering it now. I think they have

tryouts this summer at Gillette. My sister said if I won Duxbury Idol I have to.

**What do you want to do after college?** I am a senior and am going to Brandeis next year, where I'm going to major in biochemistry, so I will eventually try to do something with that. I'd like to pursue medical research or research development.

**What about singing?** I have very little idea. I'd like to join an a cappella group in college. I really love music. Maybe I'll have some sort of band when I am older. I have been thinking of ways I can keep music in my life. We'll see if American Idol pans out ...



**Greg Bray only started seriously singing a few months ago, but he was named Duxbury Idol for 2011.**